(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Some posts reserved for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes remain vacant from time to time for reasons like non-availability of suitable candidates belonging to these categories.

(b) and (c) A Special Recruitment Drive was launched to fill up the backlog reserved vacancies of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. About 53,444 backlog vacancies have filled up through this Drive.

Appointment of welfare officers

2257. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any guidelines for the appointment of welfare officers by the Central Government particularly in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, whether there is any proposal to have the same so as to ensure that the welfare officers once appointed continue without any time limit and upto death;

(d) whether it is a fact that these officers do not submit any reports of the welfare activities undertaken and the appointment is only for personal interest; and

(e) if so, the steps that are proposed to make such officers really useful and to limit their appointments till a particular age and tenure and according to their usefulness?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In Ministries/Departments, an officer of the level of Under Secretary is nominated as Welfare Officer. The guidelines for Area Welfare Officers include that their tenure shall be for two years normally and he should be a resident of the area.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The Welfare Officers are appointed by the concerned Ministries/Departments for coordinating and monitoring welfare activities during the office hours. The Area Welfare Officers send reports on the matters referred to them from time to time by the Government.

(e) Does not arise.

Period of *ad-hoc* promotion

2258. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per DOPT guideline *ad-hoc* promotion can be made for a maximum period of one year;

(b) if so, whether *ad-hoc* promotee can continue in service after one year without further specific approval of DOPT;

(c) if so, whether *ad-hoc* appointee can be treated as automatically reverted back as per said guideline; and

(d) the action Government proposes to take in case Department continue *ad-hoc* service more than one year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Yes, Sir. However, the Department of Personnel & Training (DOPT) has delegated powers to the concerned Ministries/Departments for appointing the officials of Group 'C' and 'D' posts on *ad-hoc* basis upto the period of three years subject to the conditions prescribed in the relevant guidelines.

(b) approval of the DOPT is required for continuation of *ad-hoc* approval after prescribed period.

(c) If the approval of the DOPT to the continuance of the *ad-hoc* arrangements beyond the prescribed period is not received before the expiry of the period, the *ad-hoc* appointment/ promotion shall automatically cease on the expiry of the prescribed term.

(d) Necessary instructions have been issued as in the DOPT O.M. dated 17.2.1998 to all Ministries/Departments that in cases where *ad-hoc* appointments have continued beyond one years, pay & allowances etc. after 1.1.1998 of such ad-hoc appointments are released only if the arrangement for particular period has been approved by the DOPT.

Growth rate of States

†2259. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:
DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Prime Minister has expressed concern over the huge difference in the growth rate of different States in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is taking any action so that the growth rate of States could be nearly identical;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(e) whether Government is going to provide any special package to States for this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) In the opening remarks at the 54th Meeting of the National Development Council held on December 19, 2007 the Prime Minister expressed concern over the problem of inter-regional disparities arising from some states benefiting from the ongoing growth process, while some others remaining at the bottom year after year on a large number of economic and social indicators.

(c) to (e) The Government has been taking several measures to reduce inter-state disparities in the growth rate. The policy instruments in this regard include plan and non-plan transfer of resources from the Centre to the States favouring less developed States, establishment of

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.